

Media Release

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ROYAL OPENING FOR NEW RESEARCH INSTITUTE FACILITY

Her Royal Highness, Crown Princess Mary of Denmark officially opened Australia's newest research facility, the Lowy Packer Building on Wednesday September 3 at 11am.

Located at 405 Liverpool Street, Sydney, the 9-storey building will house 240 researchers in the shared new home of the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute and St Vincent's Centre for Applied Medical Research.

The \$80 million purpose-built facility, together with the existing Garvan Building, will house the St. Vincent's Research Precinct – the largest biomedical hub in NSW that comprises the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute (VCCRI), the St Vincent's Centre for Applied Medical Research and the Garvan Institute of Medical Research.

The Lowy Packer Building was built with funds kindly provided by the NSW State Government and the Australian Federal Government, as well as generous donations from The Atlantic Philanthropies, the Lowy and the Packer Families, the National Australia Bank, ANZ Bank and Citigroup, along with many other generous donors.

Her Royal Highness, Crown Princess Mary unveiled a plaque and a bronze life-sized sculpture of the late esteemed cardiac surgeon, Dr. Victor Chang, which will sit in front of the building. This sculpture was generously donated by renowned sculptress, Linda Klarfeld.

The Premier of NSW, the Hon. Morris Iemma, MP also attended the ceremony in addition to His Eminence, George Cardinal Pell, who blessed the building.

Speaking on behalf of the Precinct, Professor Robert Graham, the Executive Director, VCCRI, said the new building and Precinct will allow the VCCRI to develop some five new research teams with 60 new research staff, as well as comparable expansion of the Garvan and St. Vincent's research efforts. It will also allow for much-needed expansion of the Precinct's existing programs and, when fully occupied, the Precinct will house some 750-800 researchers.

The new building will also allow for the development of vital ancillary core facilities, such as X-ray crystallography, and will provide increased opportunities for research training of students undertaking BSc (Hons), MSc, MD or PhD degrees as well as training of postdoctoral students.

"It will provide career opportunities and attract back some of the best and brightest Australians currently working overseas," Professor Graham added.

"More importantly, the expansion of the St. Vincent's Research Precinct's activities in all major areas of biomedical research, including heart disease, cancer, brain disorders, diabetes, obesity, blood diseases and AIDS, should play a significant role in reducing healthcare costs, and in increasing well-being and longevity, Professor Graham said.

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